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FRENTE REVOLUCIONARIA DE TIMOR-LESTE INDEPENDENTE

(REVOLUTIONARY FRONT FOR AN INDEPENDENT EAST TIMOR)

FRETILIN

For publication

To: All support groups
From: DFSE (FRETILIN)
Date: 10 April 1986

ALLEGATIONS BY MS JILL JOLLIFFE, CORRESPONDENT FOR MELBOURNE AGE (SEE ANNEX)

1. DFSE wishes to draw your attention to the enclosed article filed by Jill Jolliffe, the Lisbon-based Correspondent for The Age of Melbourne. The article, entitled "Timorese parties form anti-Jakarta coalition" (The Age, 31.3.86) contains inacuracies and falsehoods that demand a clarification.

2. In paragraph one, Ms Jolliffe suggests that it was the brakedown of FRETILIN-UDT coalition in January 1975 that caused "civil war and invasion by Indonesia". This assertion ignores well-known facts: Indonesia was determined to absorb East Timor, one way or the other, regardless of the situation in the Territory. It is regretable that a journalist and political activist who had free access to East Timor during the period of 1974-1975 and knew of the magnitude of Indonesia's destabilization campaign, should write ten years later that the invasion was caused by the brakedown of the coalition.

3. In the paragraph before last, Ms Jolliffe wrote: "Because Fretilin abroad tend to be more radical than the leadership in Timor, they showed reluctance to implement the policy - or to publicize details of a ceasefire agreement Fretilin had reached with the Indonesians". There was never any reluctance on the part of DFSE to engage in dialogue towards reconciliation and cooperation with UDT. In fact, the first attempts to reconcile the two parties began in the Fall of 1979 - by FRETILIN. Countless factors impeded an early reconciliation then. The process gained new impetus in 1984 when José Ramos-Horta, FRETILIN's Permanent Representative to the U.N., visited Australia and met with all UDT and other East Timorese leaders there. The same process began in Portugal in the Summer of 1984. Ms Jolliffe's allegations are therefore unfounded. However, more serious is her assertion that the "Fretilin abroad" (sic) witheld public announcement of the cease-fire accord of March 1983. Details of this reached DFSE in Lisbon only in May with specific instructions to release them. A Press Conference, attended by all DFSE members, was held in Lisbon during which details of cease-fire accord and other documents and photos

were made available to the Press. There was never any attempt or reluctance on the part of the collective DFSE leadership to withold details of the cease-fire accord - nor is the "FRETILIN abroad" (sic) more "radical" than the leadership inside.

10. If the reconciliation process took 10 years to come about, Ms Jolliffe should not single out FRETILIN for blame. We do not know Ms Jolliffe's motivations in trying to simplify a painfull and complex history by blaming FRETILIN.

11. FRETILIN and UDT did not sign any coalition. The joint communique and Press Conference do not amount to a coalition. The two parties simply agreed to begin a process of reconciliation and cooperation in order to unite the East Timorese communities in Portugal and Australia.

12. Nor was "the perilous insecurity of the Timor issue on the UN agenda" the main reason behind the recently announced agreement by FRETILIN and UDT. Unfortunately, the declining support for East Timor at the UN wasnot due to the lack of unity between FRETILIN and UDT and, conversely, this unity we are begining to forge will not alter the situation. We are not naive to hope that because FRETILIN and UDT decided to join forces, countries such as the U.S., Canada, Japan, Australia, India, Saudi Arabia, etc, to mention but a few, are going to be impressed by it and begin to support our struggle. The unity process has more to do with the imperative need to heal the wounds and divisions among the East Timorese in Portugal and Australia, to forge stronger and healthier relations among ourserlves, and to press for more concrete support by Portugal and Australia to our struggle.

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The AGE (Melbourne) 31.3.86

Timorese parties form anti-Jakarta coalition

By JILL JOLLIFFE

LISBON, 30 March. — A coalition of East Timorese political parties has been revived in Portugal a decade after it collapsed in Dili, causing civil war and invasion by Indonesia.

At a press conference in Lisbon Fretilin leader Abilio Araujo and the leader of the Timorese Democratic Union (UDT), Moises do Amaral, announced that the parties had formed a new coalition in order to wage a more effective diplomatic fight against the Indonesian presence in East Timor.

Fretilin is a left-of-centre liberation movement but the UDT is a conservative Catholic party, which has upheld the idea that Timor should retain close links with Portugal.

Dr do Amaral stressed that UDT had not lost its identity in joining the coalition and would work to defend it.

"We remain a Christian Democrat Party," he said, adding that claims that his party was "integrationist" or pro-Indonesian were unfounded.

The East Timorese drive for unity is partly motivated by the approximation of this year's UN debate on the issue, which risks having it taken permanently from the agenda if the Indonesian position prevails.

The main impetus for the coalition came from East Timor itself. In 1983, when Fretilin leaders abroad resumed contact with the resistance after a gap of some years, they received details of a "national unity" policy formulated by guerilla leader Jose Gusmao Sha Na Na, with instructions from him to unite with other Timorese groups — the conservative UDT, smaller nationalist groups, and Timorese catholics.

Because Fretilin abroad tend to be more radical than the leadership in Timor, they showed reluctance to implement the policy — or to publicise details of a ceasefire agreement Fretilin had reached with the Indonesians.

However, force of circumstance, including the perilous insecurity of the Timor issue on the UN agenda and insistence from their leadership in Timor, caused them to become active last year to break down factional differences which have previously divided the Timorese community in Portugal.